

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast

June 6, 2014

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource

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CBC

News story #1 Suicide Bomber from Calgary Dies

Is there a cause or political reason you would say is worth dying for? Do you think people killing themselves for political reasons are effective? This first story is about a Calgary man who has died in Iraq as a suicide bomber.

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Match the words with their definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Words in the story	Definitions
	suicide	a) a religious duty of Muslims
	attend	b) to take one's own life
	reported	c) to go to
	extremist	d) a company that works in gas, oil, solar or wind power
	jihad	e) someone who is willing to do unusual or illegal things to reach his or her political goals
	connection	f) said by a reliable source
	energy firm	g) a relation to

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

Iraq – a country in the Middle East

Syria – a country in the Middle East

socialize – to talk, visit and associate with

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file and then answer the questions below.

Answers are in the Appendix.

Listening activity: Listening Comprehension

1. Where did Salman Ashrafi go to school?
2. What types of companies did Ashrafi work for?
3. How many people did Ashrafi kill?
4. Why was Ashrafi in Syria?
5. Where did Ashrafi go from Syria?
6. What kind of group did Ashrafi fight with?
7. How many Calgarians are thought to have left Calgary to fight in a jihad?

Discussion: What is a suicide bomber? Why do you think suicide bombers do what they do? What message do you think suicide bombers are trying to send when they attack innocent people? What mind-set would suicide bombers have to be in to kill themselves?

News story #2 Gridlock

How do you get to work or school? How much time each day do you spend stuck in traffic? This second story is about the growing traffic problem in Calgary due to the growing population of the city.

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary: Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

traffic (vehicles on the road)	associate (partner)	professor (university teacher)
congestion (crowded)	increase (grow)	
pattern (repeated arrangement)	gridlock (traffic not moving)	

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

fifth worst – 4 more are worse than the 5th worst

1. The amount of people living in Calgary is always _____.
2. I am going to be late for work because I am stuck in _____. It is a total _____.
3. My _____ is really smart and she always helps me when I need it.
4. Do you notice the _____? It keeps happening again and again.
5. Let me introduce you to my _____. We work together at the bank.
6. The traffic _____ is getting worse in Calgary every year.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true (T)** or **false (F)**. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. _____ Calgary's traffic problems are small.
2. _____ A company named TomTom disagrees with the traffic report.
3. _____ Lina Kattan appears to be a traffic pattern specialist.
4. _____ The reason traffic seems to be getting worse is because the amount of people in Calgary is decreasing.
5. _____ One solution to the gridlock, according the Kattan, is that people should leave their cars at home.
6. _____ Calgary's gridlock is the second worst in Canada.
7. _____ Vancouver has the worst traffic problems in Canada.

Discussion Questions: What is the problem discussed in this story? What is the cause of the problem in this story? How can Calgary begin to solve this traffic problem? If you were in charge of organizing Calgary's traffic, what would you do to improve the congestions issue?

News story #3 Rising Condo Fees

Do you live in a house, condo or apartment? Do you pay insurance to make sure your property is going to be looked after if something were to happen to it? This next story is about the rising condo fees due to insurance prices rising in Calgary.

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily

Vocabulary: Match the words with their synonyms (words that have similar meanings). *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Words or phrases	Synonym
	1. insurance	a) standard price cost of insurance
	2. consultant	b) to ignore not do
	3. premium	c) coverage money paid to keep you or your things safe
	4. negligence	d) statement request for insurance coverage
	5. claims	e) advisor knowledgeable person

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

natural disasters – naturally occurring weather events that cause a lot of damage

faulty dishwasher – a dishwasher that has something wrong with it from the way it was made

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Matching - Match the columns according to how the subject affects the object. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Subject of statement	Matching letter (a,b,c,d,e)	Object of statement
1. condo owners		a) says the insurance premiums have gone up by about 25-35%
2. Joanna Coates		b) most insurance claims were because of broken dishwashers and overflowing bathtubs
3. natural disasters		c) are facing higher condo fees
4. condo owners' negligence		d) are partly to blame for the rising condo fees
5. prior to the flood		e) is a problem

Discussion: Why is having insurance important? What costs do insurance companies cover?

Language Focus:

Adding extra information to the subject

As you likely already know; “and” is a very common conjunction to use when adding on information about something. This language focus will look closely at how “and” is used and will demonstrate another word that can be used to add information: “also”

See how “**and**” is used to create compound sentence structures:

Example:

Story 1 - *His name is Salman Ashrafi **and** he attended the University of Lethbridge.*

Subject: The man in the story (Salman Ashrafi)

Information about the subject: His name and the school he went to

Now you try!

1. Look at the next sentence. Identify the subject and the two pieces of information about the subject. (Answers are in Appendix)

Story 2 - *Lina Kattan is an associate professor at the University of Calgary **and** studies traffic patterns.*

Subject:

Information about the subject:

The word “**Also**” and is another way we can include information in our speaking and writing. See the examples below and identify the subjects and information about each subject:

2. “**Also**” – Story 1 - His name is Salman Ashrafi and he attended the University of Lethbridge. He **also** had jobs with a variety of energy firms...

Subject:

Information about the subject:

3. “**Also**” – Story 3 - She says the premiums for insurance have increased by 25 to 35 percent. Coates says damage from natural disasters is partly to blame: a hailstorm in 2011, a windstorm in 2012 and last year's flood. But she adds that negligence on the part of owners is **also** a problem.

Subject:

Information about the subject:

Practice: Now you try to write some compound statements about a topic of your choice using “and” and “also”. Have a partner identify the subject and information about the subject of your sentences and see if they get it right.

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	JUNE 6 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, this is Rosa Marchitelli . You're listening to Learning English with CBC for the week of June 6 th .	0:00
Story 1	CBC News has learned that a man from Calgary is believed to have died as a suicide bomber in Iraq. His name is Salman Ashrafi and he attended the University of Lethbridge. He also had jobs with a variety of energy firms, including Talisman and Exxon. Ashrafi is reported to have killed about 46 people in Tarmiyah, Iraq on November 7, 2013. It seems he went first to fight in Syria, then left with his group for Iraq. Ashrafi is not the first person from Calgary believed to have fought with extremist groups. He may be one of up to 20 Calgarians who have left the city to fight in a jihad in the last year or two. CBC News has also learned there are connections between some of these men. At least 5 of them lived in the same building in downtown Calgary and socialized together.	0:13
Story 2	Calgary's traffic congestion is among the worst in the country. That's the conclusion of a new report from GPS company TomTom. Lina Kattan is an associate professor at the University of Calgary and studies traffic patterns. She says Calgary's congestion keeps getting worse as the population increases. And Kattan says people will have to start leaving the car at home. The report suggests Calgary's gridlock is the fifth worst in Canada. Vancouver has the worst.	1:27
Story 3	Condo owners in Calgary are facing higher fees as the cost of insuring their buildings goes up. Joanna Coates is a consultant who works with condo buyers and condo boards. She says the premiums for insurance have increased by 25 to 35 percent. Coates says damage from natural disasters is partly to blame: a hail storm in 2011, a windstorm in 2012 and last year's flood. But she adds that negligence on the part of owners is also a problem. Before last year's flood, most insurance claims were because of faulty dishwashers and overflowing bathtubs.	2:10

Answer Key

Story 1: Vocabulary

Answer	Words in the story	Definitions
b	suicide	a) a religious duty of Muslims
c	attended	b) to take one's own life
f	reported	c) to go to
e	extremist	d) a company that works in gas, oil, solar or wind power
a	jihad	e) someone who is willing to do unusual or illegal things to reach his or her political goals
g	connection	f) said by a reliable source
d	energy firm	g) a relation to

Listening activity: Listening Comprehension

1. Where did Salman Ashrafi go to school? University of Lethbridge
2. What types of companies did Ashrafi work for? Energy companies, such as Talisman and Exxon.
3. How many people did Ashrafi kill? 46
4. Why was Ashrafi in Syria? To fight
5. Where did Ashrafi go from Syria? To Iraq with his group
6. What kind of group did Ashrafi fight with? An extremist group
7. How many Calgarians are thought to have left Calgary to fight in a jihad? About 20

Story 2: Vocabulary

1. The amount of people living in Calgary is always increasing.
2. I am going to be late for work because I am stuck in traffic. It is a total gridlock.
3. My professor is really smart and she always helps me when I need it.
4. Do you notice the pattern? It keeps happening again and again.
5. Let me introduce you to my associate. We work together at the bank.
6. The traffic congestion is getting worse in Calgary every year.

Listening

1. T Calgary's traffic problems are small.
2. F A company named TomTom disagrees with the traffic report.
3. T Lina Kattan appears to be a traffic pattern specialist.

4. F The reason traffic seems to be getting worse is because the amount of people in Calgary is decreasing.
5. T One solution to the gridlock, according the Kattan, is that people should leave their cars at home.
6. F Calgary's gridlock is the worst in Canada.
7. T Vancouver has the worst traffic problems in Canada.

Story 3: Vocabulary

Answer	Words or phrases	Synonym
c	1. insurance	a) standard price cost of insurance
e	2. consultant	b) to ignore not do
a	3. premium	c) coverage money paid to keep you or your things safe
b	4. negligence	d) statement request for insurance coverage
d	5. claims	e) advisor knowledgeable person

Listening

Subject of statement	Matching letter (a,b,c,d,e)	Object of statement
1. Condo owners	c	a) says the insurance premiums have gone up by about 25-35%
2. Joanna Coates	a	b) most insurance claims were because of broken dishwashers and overflowing bathtubs
3. natural disasters	d	c) are facing higher condo fees
4. condo owners' negligence	e	d) are partly to blame for the rising condo fees
5. prior to the flood	b	e) is a problem

Language Focus:

1. **"And"** - Story 2 - *Lina Kattan is an associate professor at the University of Calgary and studies traffic patterns.*

Subject: Lina Kattan

Information about the subject: her job (professor at the University of Calgary) and what she studies (traffic patterns)

2. **"Also"** – Story 1 - His name is Salman Ashrafi and he attended the University of Lethbridge. He also had jobs with a variety of energy firms...

Subject: Salman Ashrafi

Information about the subject: his name, his school and his jobs (a variety of energy firms)

3. **"Also"** – Story 3 - She says the premiums for insurance have increased by 25 to 35 percent. Coates says damage from natural disasters is partly to blame: a hailstorm in 2011, a windstorm in 2012 and last year's flood. But she adds that negligence on the part of owners is also a problem.

Subject: reason for increasing insurance premiums

Information about the subject: damage from natural disasters and negligence on the part of the owners